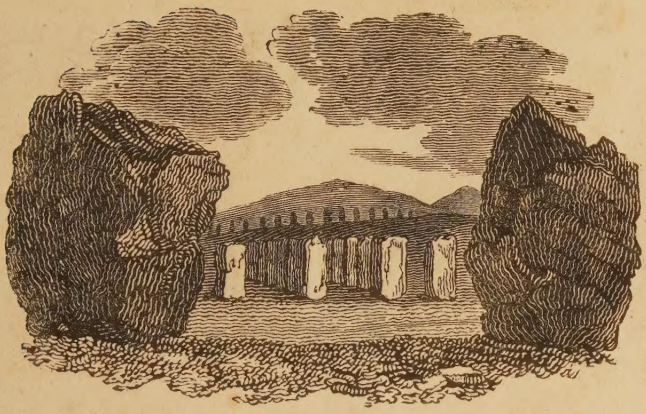
THE

CAMBRO-BRITON.

SEPTEMBER, 1819—AUGUST, 1820.

CYMRU FU, CYMRU FYDD.

TALIESIN.



VOL. I.

LONDON:

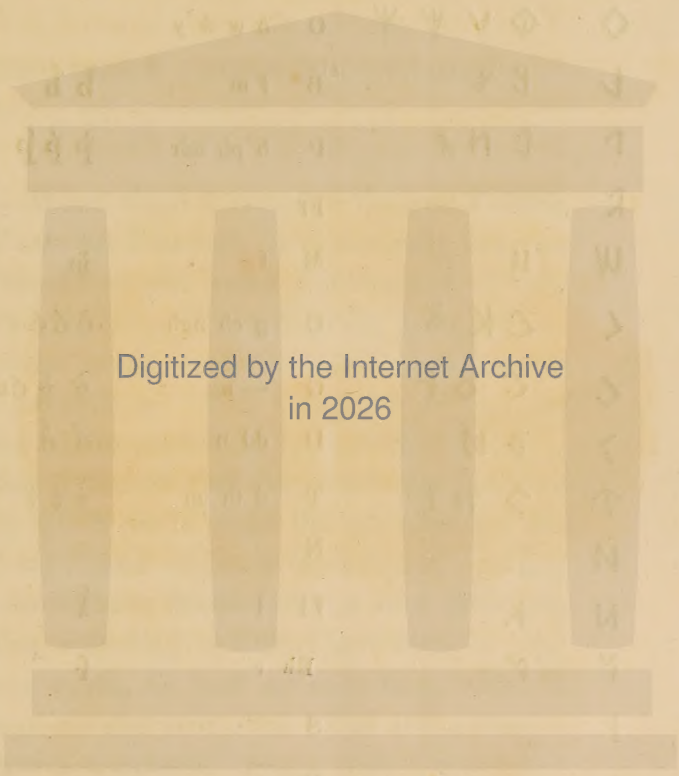
PRINTED BY MILLS AND RHYND, SHOE-LANE, FLEET-STREET,

FOR THE EDITOR,

AND PUBLISHED BY J. LIMBIRD, 355, STRAND.

1820.

BIBL. LONDINI
SHL
WITHDRAWN



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/cambro-briton_1819-09_1_1

COELBREN Y BEIRDD, OR BARDIC ALPHABET*.

Rad.	*Der.*	*Rad.*	*Der.*	*Accented Letters.*
ᚨ	ᚪ	A	â	
ᚫ	ᚬ ᚭ ᚮ	E	ê u û	
ᛁ		I		
ᛟ	ᛠ ᛡ ᛢ ᛣ	O	ô w ŵ y	
ᛒ	ᛓ ᛔ	B	f m	ḃ ḟ
ᛈ	ᛉ ᛊ ᛋ	P	b ph mh	ṗ ṕ ṗ
ᛇ		Ff		
ᛗ	ᛘ	M	f	ṁ
ᚳ	ᚳᚴ ᛝ	C	g ch ngh	ċ ć ć
ᚵ	ᚵ ᛝ ᚻ	G	— ng	ġ ǵ ćw
ᚦ	ᚧ ᚩ	D	dd n	ḋ ḍ
ᛏ	ᚦ ᛏᚾ ᛏᛗ	T	d th nh	ṫ ṫ ṫ
ᚾ		N		
ᚿ	ᚸ	Ll	l	ḷ
ᚱ	ᚱ	Rh	r	ṛ
ᛦ		S		
ᚺ		H		

* The first column in this Cut represents the Old Bardic Letters, both Radical and Derivative, the second gives their corresponding Letters, as far as they can be adapted to them, in the Roman Alphabet, and the last column contains the accented Roman Letters, employed in the Archaiology of Wales to represent the Mutations of the Welsh Consonants, as noticed in the Essay on Initial Mutations in the Eleventh Number of this Work.—ED.

[☞ *To face Page* 241.]

TO

Sir W. W. WYNN, Bart. M. P.

PRESIDENT

OF THE

METROPOLITAN CAMBRIAN INSTITUTION.

Sir,—When about to complete the first Volume of the Cambro-Briton, I was naturally anxious, that it should appear under the sanction of some name, which, from its estimation amongst our countrymen, might confer a value even on this humble production. And, I hope, I shall not be suspected of the proverbial sycophancy of dedicators, when I declare, that the permission, you have so kindly given me to make this use of yours, has satisfied my utmost wishes in this respect. At any time I should have deemed this a very flattering distinction, reflecting, as I must have done, on your hereditary worth, as well as upon that, which is more emphatically your own. But at the present moment this permission brings with it a peculiar and a heightened gratification, since the patriotic alacrity, with which you have acceded to the wishes of your country, in assuming the Presidency of her new Institution, distinguishes you, in a particular manner, as the appropriate Patron of a work dedicated to a cultivation of the Literature and Language of Wales.

Believe me, Sir, it is with no ordinary pride (if I may be allowed to say it without offence), that I find myself associated with you in the same national cause. My efforts, it is true, have necessarily been constrained by circumstances, which I have wanted either the ability or the good fortune to surmount. Yet I can honestly say, that, however deficient I may have been in the means, I have never, for a moment, failed in the inclination, to promote the public ends, for which the CAMBRO-BRITON was undertaken. The

Hic Amor, hæc Patria

of the Poet has never been absent from my thoughts, while endeavouring to fix in the following pages the evanescent lustre of ages long departed, ere it had vanished for ever,—while attempting to rescue the wisdom and the genius of our ancestors, before the waters of Oblivion had irrevocably swept them away. The design was great: the execution, I too sensibly feel, has fallen far below it. Yet, since my enterprise has experienced your Patronage, I will venture to hope, with the Shepherd in Virgil, that

Honos erit huic quoque pomo.

To you, Sir, however, I trust, it will essentially belong, as President of the Institution, so auspiciously established in the Metropolis, to secure, under more favouring circumstances and with ampler means, the success of that cause, which it was the aim of this unobtrusive work in some degree to assist. To you, Sir, and to those distinguished individuals, who may co-operate with you, I hope

we shall be indebted for the consummation of a design worthy of your highest honours, and, more than that, peculiarly worthy of the patriotic virtues, which have gained you the merited esteem of your country. We shall then behold the ancient harp of CYMRU restored to her now tuneless vallies, and shall learn to admire the venerable treasures of those times, when the mingled strains of philosophy and of song were heard to animate the solitudes of her mountains. The vindication of past ages will prove the instruction of the present; while the literature of Wales shall no longer be excluded from its legitimate station in the renown of the world. The task is a noble one; and I hope I shall not be accused of presumption, if, in reference to your distinguished share in it, I adopt the language of the younger Pliny, and say,—*Effinge aliquid et excude, quod sit perpetuò tuum. Nam reliqua rerum tuarum post te alium atque alium dominum sortientur: hoc nunquam tuum desinet esse, si semel cœperit.*

Sincerely wishing that this enviable distinction may be that of the President of the METROPOLITAN CAMBRIAN INSTITUTION, I have the honour to subscribe myself,

SIR,

With every sentiment of respect,

Your very obliged and obedient servant,

THE EDITOR.

London, July 25, 1820.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor cannot suffer this First Volume of the CAMBRO-BRITON to go into the world without a public acknowlegement of his obligation to those Gentlemen, who have so kindly assisted him in his career, and to whose assistance, he feels, he is essentially indebted for whatever success his work may have experienced. To particularize all by name, even if it were practicable, is more perhaps than he should be justified in doing; yet he cannot deny himself the pleasure of mentioning a few. In the first place he has to thank that eminent Welsh Scholar, Mr. WILLIAM OWEN PUGHE, for many contributions of great interest, as well as for much other valuable information, which has been of material service in various parts of the volume. He has also to acknowlege the very friendly interest, taken by this Gentleman in the success of his work, as well as by Mr. PARRY, the writer of the pleasing "Letters on Welsh Music," who farther demands the Editor's particular thanks for having been the first to afford encouragement to his enterprise. To the Rev. WALTER DAVIES, the Rev. P. B. WILLIAMS, the Rev. W. J. REES, the Rev. ROWLAND WILLIAMS, Mr. RICHARD LLWYD, of Chester, and Mr. THOMAS RICHARDS, of London, the Editor begs also to express his grateful acknowlegement of the valuable aid they have respectively furnished. Nor must he forget Mr. THOMAS ROBERTS, of Llwynrhudol, to whom he is indebted for most of the PENNILLION, which appear in this volume, and for many others yet unpublished. To his other Correspondents he begs generally to express his grateful sense of their co-operation, and at the same time to solicit the farther support of all in the prosecution of a design, which, whatever may be the events to come, it will always be amongst his most gratifying reflections, that he has, in any degree, contributed to promote. To such of the Public, as have favoured his humble attempt, he takes this opportunity of sincerely expressing his obligation, hoping, at the same time, for the enjoyment hereafter of that more general patronage, which may justify his perseverance in a project, that he could not abandon without feelings of the most lively regret.

LONDON, JULY 25, 1820.

THE

CAMBRO-BRITON.

SEPTEMBER, 1819.

NULLI QUIDEM MIHI SATIS ERUDITI VIDENTUR, QUIBUS NOSTRA IGNOTA SUNT. *Cicero de Legibus.*

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

THREE months have been brought to a close since my Proposals for the establishment of the CAMBRO-BRITON were first made public. When I embraced this project, it was not only without any communication with others, but with no fairer prospect of success than what might be supposed to result from the favourable spirit, by which our country appears at length to be animated. Relying upon so gratifying a change in our national character, I presumed to hope, that even this attempt might experience the benefit of it. For I concluded, and I trust rightly, that the general cause could not, in such a case, be separated from individual exertion, however humble and unobtrusive. The great ocean is fed as well by the noiseless stream as by the deep-sounding torrent. Nor have my anticipations been wholly unjustified by the event. The encouragement I have received *, if not an assurance of complete success, has been at least sufficient to urge me on in my career, with Hope still as my companion.

In the Proposals, to which I have above adverted, it was not my intention, as I there intimated, to give more than a general outline of my projected work. Since that time a short Prospectus has been circulated, communicating more explicitly the main objects of the undertaking. But, as the work itself may fall into the hands of those, who have not seen either, it becomes now my duty to enter into a particular disclosure of my plan, notwithstanding that the present Number may be considered, in some respects, as a specimen of those to succeed it. Yet, as

* The liberal patronage of the GWYNEDDIGION SOCIETY, both collectively and individually, deserves on this occasion my most grateful acknowlegement.

this can only be to a partial extent, it is fit that my readers should be apprized of those fundamental principles, on which I design that the CAMBRO-BRITON should be conducted. For upon the quality of the basis must mainly depend the fate of the superstructure.

My chief aim in this undertaking,—I wish particularly to premise,—is to diffuse amongst strangers a knowlege of the history, the manners, the genius of Wales, and to extend beyond her mountain-barriers the fame of those literary treasures, which are now, as it were, covetously hoarded within them. Not indeed, that there have hitherto been wanting patriotic individuals, who have generously endeavoured to accomplish this end. Several valuable publications might be named, having professedly no other object in view. But of periodical works, obviously the most desirable channel for the occasion, I am acquainted with no more than one,—I allude to the Cambrian Register,—in which the same course has been adopted. The suspension, however, if not the final relinquishment, of that useful undertaking leaves the field open to any new adventurer. And, in profiting by this opportunity, although I should myself fail, I may be the means of exciting others to the task with higher qualifications for its achievement. Even then I might be allowed to say, with the poet,

Est quoddam prodire tenûs, si non datur ultrà.

Although the Cambrian Register is the only periodical publication, within my knowledge, avowedly devoted to the purpose already noticed, I must not omit to mention, that a few others, written in Welsh, have, at different times, been established. The general aim of these works has been, we may presume, to preserve from decay our vernacular tongue, by promoting its cultivation amongst our countrymen,—a design unquestionably praiseworthy and patriotic. But I hope I may be permitted without offence to remark, that our venerable language, QUAM VETAT MUSA MORI, stands in no very urgent need of such aid. Consecrated, as it has been, by the ennobling genius of our Bards, surviving, as it still does, in its pristine vigour, the shock of countless ages, and the wreck of other tongues, it may securely be left to its own energies for its preservation hereafter. It was under this impression, that I deemed it advisable to pursue a different course from the works here alluded to, and to take a wider range. As soon may our native hills be moved from their position, as

our language cease to be spoken within their limits. It only remains then to make its excellencies known elsewhere, and to promulgate amongst strangers an acquaintance with those productions, which it has assuredly consigned to immortality.

To endeavour to effect this object will be the peculiar province of the CAMBRO-BRITON; and not merely this, but likewise to diffuse a general knowlege of the history, manners, and other prominent features of our country, from the earliest dawn of tradition to the present day. Her historical documents, her bardic effusions, her interesting Triads, in a word, her literary remains of every description, will, therefore, be, in their turns, translated, accompanied by such remarks as may be necessary for their illustration. To these will be added occasional essays, as well on the general topics just enumerated, as also upon the language, poetry, and music of Wales,—antiquarian researches,—statistical descriptions,—biographical sketches, and such miscellaneous information, as may tend to promote the main design before explained. It may be proper farther to observe, that the criticism of works, antient as well as modern, connected with Wales or its literature, will likewise have its share in the arrangement. And truly proud do I feel, that this department commences by the Review of such a work as COLL GWYNFA, at once a new honour to its distinguished author, and a lasting ornament to his country.

Nor shall the native AWEN of CYMRU be excluded from these pages. On the contrary, they will be open not only to a selection of the most celebrated strains of past times, but to such choice effusions of the present day, as I may have the good fortune to obtain. And, with this view, it will be my particular aim to collect and preserve, as opportunities may present themselves, those national stanzas, known by the name of PENNILLION, which now, like the leaves of the Sybil, are scattered abroad at the mercy of every accident, or live only in the fleeting voice of a few individuals. It was "in these beautiful strains "peculiar to ourselves, in these instructive morsels" (to borrow the expressive words of an esteemed friend), "that the moralist "set his precepts to music, the lover sang his notes of admira-"tion, and the heroes heard of the tombs of the warriors."

The English Muse will also be a welcome guest, whenever she may devote her lays to the cause, which the CAMBRO-BRITON has undertaken to espouse. Such a tribute will be, at all times, peculiarly acceptable.

Another feature, and by no means the least important, of this publication, will be its attention to the religious and political welfare, to the agricultural and commercial relations, and to the other paramount interests of the Principality. Whenever these objects may claim any particular notice, I trust the CAMBRO-BRITON will not be found remiss in evincing either a due reverence for our Established Church, a loyal attachment to the excellent Constitution, of which Wales has so long experienced the benefit, or, above all, that love of country, which impels the real patriot to seek its good at any price, and to maintain it through all hazards.

It is now only necessary to intimate, that all transactions of any moment, and all occurrences of interest, having reference to Wales, will be punctually recorded. The CAMBRO-BRITON will, in this point of view, I hope, be found a faithful chronicler of the most material events of the day, rejecting indeed all matters of mere ephemeral concern, but carefully embodying in its pages whatever may deserve to be remembered hereafter.

I have thus completed the detail of my proposed plan; in which, however, such improvements will, from time to time, be made, as may be suggested by a more experienced judgment. But I wish here to remark, that every Number of the CAMBRO-BRITON will not necessarily embrace *all* the comprehensive heads of which I have spoken. The limited size of the work forbids this. And it will besides be sufficient, if, in the course of its career, the several important topics, adverted to, should receive the attention they merit, consistently with that due regard, which will be observed, in its different numbers, to the interest and variety of their contents.

This Address must not conclude without a few words on the prospect I entertain of the proper accomplishment of my undertaking. Of my own pretensions it would ill become me to speak. Singly and unassisted, I have already declared, I should be exposed to considerable risk. It has consequently formed one of my first objects to procure the aid of those patriotic individuals, whose talents and labours have been so laudably employed in the cause of Cambrian Literature. And in this, I am proud to add, I have partially succeeded. Three gentlemen, distinguished in their respective pursuits, have contributed their aid to the present number, and have thus, no doubt, bestowed upon it a value, which I could not otherwise have anticipated. To another I am indebted for the PENNILLION, which I rejoice that the CAMBRO-BRITON is

enabled to present on its first appearance. Whilst I thus express my obligation for favours received, I must not omit to solicit others. On this point, then, I will briefly premise, that all communications, calculated to promote the objects of this undertaking, will be accepted with pride, and acknowleged with gratitude.

Of the typographical execution of the work I may speak less reservedly, as I may speak without incurring the imputation of egotism. I hope, then, it will be found, that, in this respect, the CAMBRO-BRITON needs not shrink from a competition with any similar publication. A new type has been cast for the occasion; and all possible care will be taken to preserve, in the exterior appearance of the several numbers, a general regularity both of form and arrangement, so that, at the expiration of every twelve months, (if it be not too much presumption to indulge such a prospect) they may be united in one neat and uniform volume. For this purpose a general index and title-page will accompany every twelfth number of the work, as long as it may continue to merit the support of the public.

All that now remains is to take leave of my readers for the present as far as I am personally concerned. And, if I cannot do this with a full confidence in the success of my efforts to gratify them, it is not entirely without hope. I should not have hazarded the undertaking, if I had not, to a certain extent, indulged this cheering anticipation. Although I cannot now presume, therefore, to say, with the old Roman actors, VOS VALETE ET PLAUDITE, it shall be my invariable study so to conduct the CAMBRO-BRITON, as to be justified, to whatever degree, in adopting this valediction hereafter.

***

THE EDITOR.

THE TRIADS.—No. I.

OF all the antient documents of Wales, the Triads, so peculiarly national, must be admitted to be the most deserving of our attention. And those, which are called Historical, or "Triads of the Isle of Britain," are particularly valuable, as well from their unquestionable antiquity, as from the interesting events, to which they relate. The peculiarity of their construction, ignorantly assumed by some as a ground of objection, is amongst the most satisfactory proofs of the venerable authenticity of their origin. Their very defects too, such as the want of dates and connection, bear ample testimony to the early ages, which gave them birth.

And, if to these be added the obscurity, or, it may be said, total inexplicability of the terms, used in some of them, little doubt can remain as to the remoteness of the era, to which they may generally be ascribed. Nor will it weaken this conclusion to observe, that in many of them, as noticed by a learned and ingenious writer *, are contained doctrines totally at variance with our divine religion, and which accordingly appropriate such to a period at least antecedent to the establishment of Christianity in this island.

From this general allusion to the authentic character of the antient Triads, it may be worth our while to turn to a more particular, though to a brief, examination of their acknowleged origin. It is then to the Bardic or Druidical Institution, as it primitively existed in this country, that we must assign their first introduction. The encouragement of oral tradition, whether by songs or aphorisms, formed a principal characteristic of that celebrated order. It was in this manner, that they recorded the most memorable events of their country; and so it was, that they preserved for after-times their own rules and doctrines †. Poetry had thus for ages anticipated the functions of History; and in the Triads were embodied whatever might not admit of diffusion in the strains of the bard. These unwritten records again, being regularly recited at the bardic assemblies, were maintained for centuries in their original, or very nearly their original, purity. The art of memory was thus reduced to a practical system, and it can not be denied, that the form of the triad was most happily chosen for the purpose. Its conciseness, its simplicity, its general uniformity at once point out its advantages as the vehicle of traditional knowlege. And it deserves also to be remembered, that the number THREE has, from the earliest times, been held in peculiar veneration, and, it may have been, on this very account,—or, as has been justly observed, because it forms "a kind of limit to the natural power "of repeated exertion, an idea so far at least founded in nature "as to have become a favourite with the poets of all ages." The Sect of Pythagoreans, in particular, with whom the Druids are presumed by some to have borne a resemblance in more points than this, regarded the triad as the first perfect number,

* The late Rev. Peter Roberts, in his "Sketch of the Early History of the Cymry."

† Cæsar bears particular testimony to this practice, and ascribes it, with his usual sagacity, to the proper cause,—"neque eos, qui discant, "litteris confisos, minus memoriæ studere." BELL. GALL. lib. 6. c. 14.

and gave this as a reason for their triple libations, as well as for the tripod, from which were delivered the Oracles of Apollo.

The Triads, thus originating, continued to be in use during a long succession of ages, until the extinction of Bardism; varying therefore in their antiquity from the most distant times down to those which are commonly called historical, and even so far as the twelfth century. And that many of these were ever regarded of the first authority is evident from the respect, with which they are noticed by the most antient Welsh Bards, whose writings still survive, and especially by Taliesin, who wrote in the sixth century. Such, as have descended to this time, are preserved in some of our oldest MSS., and were, some of them, thus collected, it is supposed, as early as the seventh century*. Although, all that now remain must have borne but a small proportion with those once in existence, "their number is sufficient" (to adopt the words of the estimable author already twice quoted) "to determine some essential circumstances as to the origin and "history of the nation, and the real doctrines of the Bards. "And it is so far a pleasing reflection, that a discovery is made "of authorities, that point out an origin in conformity with a "general opinion, built upon the systems and ideas of the histo-"rians of other nations, without a knowlege of such records "being possessed by the nation itself†."

These interesting remains may be classed under the various heads of history,—bardism,—theology,—ethics and jurisprudence,—exclusively of those, that relate, in a more especial manner, to language and poetry. Of the historical some are purely so, and others evidently blended with fable, yet, even in this view, conveying much curious tradition. It will be the object of this portion of the CAMBRO-BRITON to supply translations of the Triads with reference to the classes above enumerated. The space, occupied by the foregoing observations, will not allow a selection, at present, of more than the following, which are extracted from the historical and ethical Triads. The originals may be found in the second and third volumes of that valuable repository of Welsh learning, the "ARCHAIOLOGY of WALES."

***

* This is stated in E. Llwyd's Archæologia Britannica, p. 264, as the opinion of that celebrated antiquary Mr. Vaughan, of Hengwrt. But it should be observed that the testimony of the old copyists of the Welsh MSS. does not go higher than the 10th century. The antient Triads however were principally collected during the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries.

† "Early History of the Cymry."

TRIADS OF THE ISLE OF BRITAIN.

I. THERE were three names imposed on the isle of Britain from the beginning. Before it was inhabited its denomination was the Sea-defended Green Spot; after being inhabited it was called the Honey Island, and after it was formed into a commonwealth by Prydain, the son of Aedd Mawr, it was called the Isle of Prydain. And none have any title therein but the nation of the Cymry. For they first settled upon it; and before that time no men lived therein, but it was full of bears, wolves, beavers, and bisons.

[In the original the names, translated *beavers* and *bisons*, are *Efeinc* and *Ychain banawg*. The description, given of the first in the Mabinogion and the Poets, answers to the crocodile and not to the beaver. The literal meaning of the other term is *prominent oxen*, but whether, from their having high horns or hunches, like the buffalo, or from their great height of body, it does not appear certain; most probably the first. A better opportunity will occur for speaking of these animals in connection with an antient and extraordinary tradition of the Cymry, as recorded in the Triads.]

II. The three primary divisions of the isle of Britain: Cymru, Lloegr, and Alban, or Wales, England, and Scotland; and to each of the three appertained the privilege of royalty. They are governed under a monarchy and voice of country, according to the regulation of Prydain, the son of Aedd Mawr; and to the nation of the Cymry belongs the establishing of the monarchy, by the voice of country and people, according to privilege and original right. And under the protection of such regulation ought royalty to be in every nation in the isle of Britain, and every royalty under the protection of the voice of country. Therefore it is said, as a proverb, "A country is mightier than a prince."

III. The three privileged ports of the isle of Britain: the port of Ysgewin, in Gwent; the port of Gwygyr, in Môn; and the port of Gwyddno, in Caredigion.

[The present Newport, on the Uske, in Monmouthshire, was probably the first of these, and Beaumaris the second. The sea has overflowed the other, and formed the present Cardigan bay, where extensive remains of embankments are discernible, which protected a fine tract of level country, the territory of Gwyddno Garanhir, called Cantrev y Gwaelod, overflowed in the sixth century. A poem, ascribed to Gwyddno, on this disastrous event is preserved in the Archaiology of Wales, vol. i. p. 165.]

IV. The three principal rivers of the isle of Britain: Havren, in Cymru, [the Severn, in Wales;] Tain, in Lloegr, [the Thames, in England;] and Hymyr, in Deivr and Brynaich, [the Humber, in Deira and Bernicia, comprising the six northern English counties.]

V. The three primary islands lying off the isle of Britain: Orc, Manaw, and Gwyth, or Orkney, Man, and Wight; and afterwards the sea broke the land, so that Anglesey (Môn) became an island; and in like manner the isle of Orc was broken, so that many islands were formed there, and other parts of Wales and Scotland became islands.

[Nennius, in his "Historia Brittonum," written in the eighth or ninth century, confirms the account given in this Triad. "Three considerable islands," he says, "belong to Britain: one on the south, opposite the Armorican shore, called Guerth; another between Ireland and Britain, called Eubonia, or Manau; and another directly north, beyond the Picts, named Orch. And hence it was antiently a proverbial expression in reference to its kings and rulers,—'He reigned over Britain and its three islands'."]

TRIADS OF WISDOM.

I. There are three branches of wisdom: wisdom towards God, wisdom with respect to every fellow man, and wisdom with respect to one's self.

II. The three recognitions which produce wisdom: the knowlege of God, the knowlege of the heart of man, and the knowlege of one's own heart.

III. The three indispensibles of wisdom: genius, science, and discrimination.

IV. The three stabilities of wisdom: what is right, beautiful, and possible.

V. Three things will be obtained by wisdom: the good (things) of the world, mental comfort, and the love of God.

VI. In three things wisdom is apparent: genius, science, and demeanour.

VII. The three exertions of wisdom: to understand nature by genius, to perceive truth by studying it, and to cultivate love and peace.

VIII. Three things in a man that make him wise and good: qualities, science, and power.

IX. Three things with which wisdom can not exist: inordinate desire, debauchery, and pride.

X. Three things without which there can be no wisdom: generosity, abstinence, and virtue.

BARDIC PORTRAITS.

TALIESIN.

Among the modern nations of Europe few, if any, can boast of poetical remains of equal antiquity with those claimed by the Welsh. And of these the Works of Taliesin may be regarded in every point of view as the most remarkable. Their many references, both to historical events, and to the mystical doctrines of the Druids, place them in a pre-eminent rank as memorials of the early age, in which their author flourished,—while the poetical excellence of most, however obscured by the lapse of time, proves the justice of his claim to the honourable appellation, given him in the Triads, of "Chief of the Bards*." There are seventy-eight poems preserved under his name in the Archaiology of Wales: and besides those, above noticed, of an historical and mystical character, they comprise others, which may be described generally as theological, encomiastic, elegiac, and lyrical. Many of these remains may be proved to be genuine by the reference, which the bard makes in them to himself as the author †; and others by their allusion to occurrences, which are known from other sources to have happened in his time, as well from the concurrent suffrage of later bards as to the fact.

According to these records, and also to the testimony of some antient MSS., the life of Taliesin occupied about fifty years, during the middle of the sixth century. The first incident, which we learn of it, is similar to that recorded of the infant Moses. For Taliesin is reported to have been found, exposed in a coracle, in a fishing wear, on the coast of Cardigan, belonging to Elffin, son of Gwyddno Garanhir, king of Gwent, of whom mention is made in a preceding page of this Number ‡. He was received, from that moment, under the protection of Elffin, who must have continued his patronage for some years, as we find, that he introduced him afterwards to his father's court, upon which occasion the young bard (for he is presumed to have been

* The Triad, here alluded to, describes him also as one of the three chief bards of the Isle of Britain with Merddin Emrys and Merddin, son of Morfryn, who was a pupil of Taliesin.—Arch. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 75.

† See Arch. of Wales, vol. i. p. 21, 25, 50, &c.

‡ It is supposed by some, that the catastrophe, noticed in p. 8, *ante*, was the means of reducing Gwyddno to the necessity of supporting Elffin, his only son, by the produce of the wear here alluded to. But the circumstance is not very material: nor, if it were, can it be ascertained with any precision.

then a mere boy) presented to Gwyddno his mystical poem, entitled Taliesin's History *(Hanes Taliesin*)*, and to his patron that called the Consolation of Elffin *(Dyhuddiant Elffin†)*, both of them still extant. The latter effusion, which is delicately written in the character of an exposed orphan, was designed to console Elffin on the recent failure of his fishery, a circumstance attributed, it seems, both by himself and others, to the extravagance and dissipation of his past life. Taliesin endeavours, with great ingenuity, to remove his melancholy on this occasion, and, from the beautiful moral feeling displayed in the poem, we may conclude, that his effort was not made in vain. A literal translation of this production will be found in a subsequent part of the present Number.

We find the bard's gratitude towards his patron evinced by another effusion, entitled the Mead-Song *(Canu y Mêdd‡)*, written during Elffin's imprisonment in the castle of Deganwy, where he was confined by his uncle Maelgwn, sovereign of North Wales, with whom Taliesin was afterwards in particular favour. And we learn from his poem on the Sons of Llyr *(Kerdd am Veib Llyr §)*, as well as from some old Welsh historians, that he succeeded, by the magic of his song, in redeeming Elffin from his captivity.

How soon his connection with Elffin ceased does not appear;—but in the maturer part of his life we find him to have been the bard of Urien Reged, a Cumbrian chieftain, who is also celebrated in the poems of Llywarch Hên. Urien, as we are informed by the Genealogy of the Saints *(Bonedd y Saint,)* came to settle in South Wales, where for some time he distinguished himself by his military services, but was, towards the close of his life, numbered amongst the saints of Bangor Catwg, in Glamorgan‖. Taliesin has addressed several poems to him, in one of which¶ he describes himself as residing at that period near the lake Ceirionydd, in Caernarvonshire:

> And I also Taliesin
> Of the banks of the lake Ceirionydd.

Of the education of this "chief of bards," all, known with any certainty, is that it was completed under the celebrated Catwg, surnamed the Wise, at Llanfeithin, in Glamorgan. He

* Arch. of Wales, vol. i. p. 19. † Ib. p. 83. ‡ Ib. p. 22.
§ Ib. p. 67. See also *p.* 34, where another allusion is made to this event. "*Doddwyf Deganhwy*," &c. ‖ See the "Cambrian Biography."
¶ *Anrec Urien.* Arch. of Wales, vol. i. p. 50.

was the first abbot of Llancarfan, and is distinguished by his excellent collection of antient Welsh maxims, which are published in the Archaiology *. Taliesin, as a bard, was necessarily initiated in the Druidical mysteries, and to which some of his writings, as before noticed, prove him to have been strongly attached. He had a son Afaon, who is represented as having renounced the peaceful pursuits of bardism for the turbulent occupation of a warrior, in which capacity he fought under Cadwallon, Prince of North Wales. For this reason he is described, in an antient Triad, with two others, likewise of bardic parentage, as one of the "three chief-like bulls" of the isle of Britain. Taliesin is supposed to have died about the year 570 †.

The variety of the verse, as well as of the topics, embraced by Taliesin's muse, makes it difficult to ascribe to it any general character. He not only employed most of the metres then in use, but even enriched his poetry with others borrowed from the Greek and Roman writers, before that time unknown to the language,—but since familiarly used by the bards as far as they could be adapted to the genius of the Welsh tongue, and the peculiar character of its poetry.

That Taliesin had profited by the able instruction of Catwg is clear from several parts of his writings, where the allusions, he makes, prove the great extent of his learning for the age in which he lived. But what he seems to have studied with superior avidity and success was, as already intimated, the mystical lore of the Druids, with which many of his productions are so deeply impregnated as to become extremely obscure, if not, for the most part, unintelligible. The doctrine of metempsychosis, in particular, appears to have been a favourite theme. Two or three of his poems are expressly devoted to it, and afford a singular instance of the effect of that wild notion upon a powerful and creative imagination. As a repository of the maxims of Druidism, however, and also as a record of historical facts, the productions of Taliesin must be admitted to possess an important

* Vol. iii. p. 1 to 99.

† I am not ignorant, that an attempt has been made, by the very intelligent author of the "Celtic Researches," and of the "Mythology and Rites of the Druids," to throw an air of fable over this account of Taliesin. But, if this note should meet the eye of that gentleman, he will pardon me, I hope, for observing, that there appears, in the instance above noticed at least, too laboured an effort to subject to a favourite hypothesis all antient facts and authorities,—too manifest an anxiety to drag history captive at the triumphal car of mythology.—Ed.

value. His elegiac and lyrical poems abound in pathetic touches, as well as in sublime fancy and fine moral thought. And we can hardly accuse him of an unjustifiable degree of vanity, when we hear him designate himself as being at once a poet and a man of erudition *, or even when he claims, for the property of his muse, the flowing speech of a prophet †.

***

WELSH MUSIC.—No. I.

To the EDITOR *of the* CAMBRO-BRITON.

SIR,—As the CAMBRO-BRITON is to be devoted to Wales, her History, Poetry, and Literature in general, a few observations on her *Music* will, I trust, be acceptable to your readers. It will be necessary for me to express myself in a manner different from what I should do, were I addressing persons acquainted with the science, and to avoid technical phrases. For few would understand me, were I to say, that, "to modulate from the tonic to the dominant, a sharp 4th will be required, or to modulate from the tonic to the sub-dominant, a flat 7th will be necessary, &c. &c." I feel it incumbent on me to say thus much, lest some discordant brother might feel disposed to notice my (supposed) lack of knowlege.

In the course of my professional career, I have had the good fortune to hear specimens of almost every national music, from the classic strains of the Italian, to the wild war-song of the rude Indian.—And to none shall the *Welsh* yield in point of character! What can be more characteristic than, *Of a noble Race was Shenkin?* The immortal Handel introduced it, in one of his Operas; and Mr. Cramer, the celebrated piano-forte performer, thus mentions it in his Instruction Book—"This Air is a fine specimen of the Welsh national music; originality and boldness of character are united in the melody."—*The Rising of the Lark* is another beautiful air, full of energy and melody. Dr. Haydn said, that it was one of the finest compositions he had ever heard. This is a great favourite among the singers in Wales;

* "Wyf llogell cerdd, wyf llëenydd." *Buarth Beirdd.* Arch. of Wales, vol. i. p. 27. Many other similar instances occur in his poems.

† Mydwyf Taliesin
Areith lif Dewin.—*Canu y Byd Mawr.* Ib. p. 25.

and the stanzas, in praise of the fair maids of *Meirionydd*, are sung to it. The celebrated song in the Beggar's Opera of "Cease your funning" is a Welsh air, *(Llwyn Onn)*, varied a little. The song, which I wrote for Mr. Braham, called "Beauty in Tears," is to the same air. But, in order to give your readers an idea of the various styles and characters of the Welsh airs, it will be proper, that I should class them, making such observations on them, as I may deem proper, and point those out, which are mostly sung in these days. I have arranged and published two volumes of the Welsh Music for a military band; also a Collection for the piano-forte, flute, and violoncello; and a Selection of Melodies with appropriate English words, so that I am not unacquainted with their beauties *.

Wishing every possible success to the CAMBRO-BRITON,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

July 15, 1819. JOHN PARRY.

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Mr. EDWARD LLWYD † *to Mr.* HUMPHREY WANLEY ‡; *dated* APLETON, February 8th, 1703.

SIR,—Your first letter being at Oxford, I could return no speedier answer to the last: nor can I indeed yet a satisfactory one. As for the names of Fœrmen and Owun, if you find the Saxons used them, there's no more to be sayd:—but, because you ask'd me whether they were not British names, I thought you took it for granted, or at least suspected, they were not Saxon.

* The late Mr. Owen Jones presented me with a book containing thirty airs, which were collected, among the Harpers in Wales, by a person employed by him for that purpose. Several of these have never been published.—J. P.

† The well-known author of the *Archæologia Britannica*, the first volume only of a comprehensive work, which he designed to publish, on the Language and Antiquities of Wales,—but which, unfortunately for his country, he did not live to complete. He was a native of Cardiganshire, and studied at Oxford, where he became keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, an office which he retained until his death, in 1709. He left behind him many valuable MSS. of Welsh learning, which were purchased by Sir Thomas Sebright, and continued for a long time in that family. It is to be feared, however, that they have since been destroyed by fire.—ED.

‡ He was librarian to Lord Oxford, and arranged the famous Harleian Collection of MSS., now in the British Museum.—ED.

I thank you for your transcript of the barbarous words in the Cambridge Psalter, some of which I know to be Irish, and conclude the rest, which I understand not, to be so, because in just the same hand. The papers enclosed were very acceptable, and are here returned as you desired. That the Irish received their alphabet from the Britons is the opinion of a learned and judicious author of their own country, Sir James Ware, in his *Disquisitiones de Hibernià*, &c., where he says, "Porrò ut Iberni "olim utebantur linguâ antiquâ Britannicâ, ita etiam á priscis "Britannis accipiebant alphabetam ceu literas, uti fortè Saxones "posteà ab Hibernis, dum ad scholas Hibernicas discendi gratiâ "confluerunt." The same we find to be the opinion also of Bollandus, for which Flaherty is much displeased with him, in the third part of his *Ogygia*. As for letters among the Britans *, you know (whatsoever they had before the Roman Conquest) all are agreed, they became partly civilized upon that conquest. But, if there be any authentique proof, that the Anglo-Saxons (who, you know, came not in til about 400 years after) had the use of letters at their coming, 'tis, I must confess, what I am ignorant of.

I communicated a copy of the monument of Prince Kadvan † (which is a rude stone above the church door at Lhan Gadwaladr, in Anglesey), to Mr. Hicks, of Trevithic, whom you formerly mentioned, which he shewing with some others to Dr. Musgrave, of Exeter, the Dr. beg'd copies of them, and sent them to Dr. Sloan, who has printed them in the Philosophical Transactions. I did not, I think, mention in my last, that the monument was dated anno 607, but onely that Cadvan, whose monument I conclude that to be, was one of the British commanders at the battle of Bangor, which, according to the Chron. Sax., was that year. It's so plain and barbarous, that it contains nothing at all but "Catamannus Rex Sapientissimus, Opinatissimus Omnium Regum." I knew not at first there was such a word as *opinatissimus;* but 'tis a classical word, and the same with *celeberrimus*. The stone is, perhaps, but a piece of what it was at first.

I thank you heartily for your information concerning the lections out of Scripture in the MS. NE D. 2.—19; for I had neglected your having observed (that I now remember) no British words interlined, which were the maign notes I looked after. When I have spare time I hope to renew my acquaintance with

* The orthography of the original, in this and other instances, is scrupulously observed.—Ed.

† Cadfan, son of Iago, was prince of North Wales in 603. In 613 he succeeded to the nominal sovereignty of Britain, and died in 630.—Ed.

that valuable monument. I found several British words in Eutecχ; for so the prefacer will have us read that name. He begins his preface *in honomati sumitonantis*, &c., which countenances your reading of the small paper sent in your last, which I now return, being able to adde nothing to your conjecture: nor could I, indeed, have read so much of it myself. The book is, no doubt of it, British;—but, whether you can call it Cambro-British may be scrupled. However, 'tis but leaving out the former part of the word, and you are safe.

My Irish vocabulary of obsolete words is but a transcript of the small one given to the Bodleian Library by Dr. Hyde: but I have also the old MS. ones, out of which that was printed, as I guesse. I mean not the same copies, but others antient and on velom. I have the Irish Catechism, both the Popish and Protestant. But the Highland Grammar and Lexicon, which you say the Duke of Argyle has, is what I never heard of, and shall therefore be heartily obliged if you can procure me the use of them, especially the latter.

If you write to Man, I should be glad of a copy of the eleventh chapter of Leviticus in Bp. Philips's Translation of the Bible; which, as I take it, was never printed, but is there in MS. I never saw any Welsh writing near so old as that you sent me out of the Lichfield MS., excepting three verses I lately sent to the Bp. of Hereford, who is so curious in our language and antiquities, that I am sure he would be very glad to see the Lichfield MS.

I know not the books you mention in the publique library written *literis Hibernicis*, unlesse you mean those also in that language amongst Abp. Laud's. But I am at no great losse as to the reading part; but have far to seek for the old language as well as (I fear me) even all their own nation.

As to the older entries, you know they are all maim'd except two: nor are they indeed entire. The former I read thus:—
" Ostendit ista conscriptio quòd dederunt Rhesus et Hirv . . . . . .
" Brechfa * usque ad Hirfaen Gwydhag †, á solitudine Gelhi ‡
" Irlath usque ad Camdhwr §. Emolumenta ejus sunt sexa-
" ginta panes et vervex et *gworthewyr* || butyri. Deus omnipotens
" testis est. Sadyrnwydd, Sacerdos, testis; Nywys, T.; Gwrgi,
" T.; Cwdhwlv, T.—De Laicis Cynwern, T.; Colhwyn, T.; Ky-
" hyrged, T.; Ermin (ceu Ewyn), T.—Qui custodierit benedictus

* Nomen loci. † Columnam saxeam conspicuam. ‡ Sylvæ.
§ Nomen fluvii. || Mensura hodiè ignota.

" erit, et qui franxerit maledictus a Dõ." The other, though best preserved, is not intelligible to me. The beginning seems plain, viz. " Surrexit Tydvwlch, filius Tinctoris, et Januarius " Eremita, ut postularent terram Teliavi, quæ erat in manu " Elevii, filii Gelhig et . . . . . "

I am, Sir, your obliged friend and servant,

E. Lhwyd.

LETTER II.

Mr. Richard Gruffydd* *to* Camden; *dated* Anglesey, January †.

Good Mr. Clarenceux,—I have had your kind letters, and understand from this gentleman your great inquisitive care of my health and well-doyng, which of your only great curtesy doth procede and no merit in me, and maketh me so far beholding unto you, as I shall remain your dettoure.

You say, you will cast about for Amirate upon Tacitus, which, if you find, I pray you to deliver to this gentleman with a note of the price, which you shall receave with convenient speed. The letter I sent you I suspect myself, and yet, as I hear it is of recorde, I will know the trueth and certify you thereof.

As touching *Gwynedd* (which you miscalle *Gwenith*, in Welsh *wheat*,) my meaning and the dryfte of my last letter was (not determining ought myself) to offre and represent to your learned censure, if our Gwynedd, Vannes in Brytain, in Latin called Veneti, they of the same name *ad mare Adriaticum et ad mare Balticum*, where Halmodius doth place the towne of *Wynethum*, did participate in idemptitye of name, as I think they do, referring, if they do so, to your exquisite judgment to find out the cause and reason thereof. They *ad mare Balticum*, by consent of wryters, are thought to come of *Heneti*, in Asia, and their language is called *lingua Henetica*, being the Sclavon tongue, and much commended as copiouse and significant. They *ad mare Adriaticum*, passing over particular opinions, are gene-

* Owing to the original MS. being torn, the name of Gruffydd does not appear in full. The first four letters are, however, legible: and I have ventured to supply the remainder, as not knowing any other Welsh name, to which such a beginning is applicable. Perhaps among the readers of the Cambro-Briton it may be possible to procure some information of the writer.—Ed.

† No year is mentioned.—Ed.

rally supposed to have come thither with Antenor from Troy. We of this country think ourselves to be some remayne of the same, althoughe I believe we came hither from Gallia. As for Genonia in Pausanias*, confining with Brigantes, I think they belong nothing to us. This with some may work a diversity in the name of us of this country and them of Armorica, that we end in *dd* or *th*, and they in *s*, whereas, in trueth it proceedeth of the dialect. We say *davad* a sheepe, *gwlad* a country, and *huad* a dog; they and the Cornishe say *davas*, *gulas*, *hias*, or *hios*, whereof, as I think, was deduced *Hiesus* adored in *formâ caninâ*.

They of Vannes in Armorica I cannot gesse from whence they come, otherwise than the rest of the people and nations of Gallia. Geoffrey used *Venedotus*, and not *Venetus*, for the surname of *Maelgwin*, which proceedeth of his ignorance, as he was an asse, and knew no more what he said there than in the rest of his booke, that he farsed with infinite lyes and erroures. He, among his manifold falshodes, defaced the glory of our nacion, I meane King Arthur, the noblest prince of his tyme comparable with any in the world, whom learned wryters do highly commend and lament to have wanted a true trumpet of his own fame. Geoffrey wryteth no trueth of him, hydeth his noble actes worthy of all memory, and attributeth to him the things, he never did, very false and unlykely with respect of the state of the time and the consent of wryters.

As for *Maglocunus* and *Draco Insularis*†, they be names devized, the first by fantasticke ignorance accompanied with a vague shew of contrefait skylle, the other by particular passion breaking out into bitter invective against our countrey prynces. Moreover I do frankly confesse, that I think *Gwynedd* to be an antient name, and, that which is more and may be of some accompted most absurd, I believe, that Lloegr, Wales, and Poys, with many others yet extant, be antient names, and so antient as that they were retained before rather the comyng than the departure of the Romans. And, as for Deheubarth, it is none other name of Wales, than is the North and West of England.

. . . . . ‡.

* See *Camden's Britannia*, in the remarks on the Ordovices. Gibson's Edition, p. 650 —Ed.

† See Edward Llwyd's observations on these names in *Camden's Britannia*, in his "Additions to Caernarvonshire." Ibid, p. 670.—Ed.

‡ From the paleness of the ink about twelve lines are here quite illegible.—Ed.

I have said before what I think of Gwynedd, that it is borrowed of Veneti in Armorica. Concerning Poys, corruptly called Powys, I think it cometh of the name of Poysi, a town in France, where there was, near forty year past, a conference for religion. There was a towne situate six miles west of Salop, destroyed by Owen Glyndwr, where the castell and a village yet remain, called Caors, which name I think to be borrowed of Caors, in France.

I could risk more; but this sufficeth. I ende this letter from home, as you may see by the change of my inke and penne. I pray you write unto me what you think of this my conceit, and also how Armorica came to be called Britannia; and I assure you upon the receipt thereof I will more at large write of this matter, and also what I think of Britayne. In the mean time I commyt you to the care of the Almighty. Anglesey, Idib: Januar.

Totus tuus,

RICHARD GRUFFYDD.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS.

OWEN JONES.

THE benefactors of mankind are not always to be sought in the high road of popular glory. The senate and the camp teem, it is true, with renown at once splendid and dazzling. But in the shade of private life, in the sequestered walks of retirement, we shall often find public virtue, less ostentatious indeed in its immediate effects, but more beneficial in its general aim: and for which, perhaps, posterity shall weave a more unsullied wreath than any, that has adorned the brows of a conqueror or a statesman.

Of the various methods, by which a private individual may promote the interests of his country, the encouragement of its literature must not be esteemed the least efficacious. If the bounteous hand of charity may command a sublimer influence, the benefits, that flow from the patronage of learning and science, are of a more extensive and of a more durable character. If the tendency of the former be to alleviate the sufferings, and to supply the necessities, of our nature,—undoubtedly a heavenly occupation,—it is more peculiarly the province of the latter to spread abroad the empire of morality and of knowlege. The protector of literature, therefore, whether by fostering living

talent, or by rescuing from oblivion the genuis of past ages, has an indisputable claim to be enrolled amongst the benefactors of his fellow-men.

The position here advanced is one, which will be allowed to apply to all countries and to all times, but with more peculiar force to such times and countries, as may have been remarkable for a dearth of public spirit in this respect. The merit, naturally belonging to this species of patriotism, is thus enhanced by the contrast, and especially, if it be the disinterested spirit of a humble individual contrasted with the supineness of affluence and of rank.

Such is the description of worth, which it is the aim of this brief memoir to record. And the "short and simple annals" of Mr. Owen Jones are easily filled. He was a younger son of a respectable family, which had been long in the enjoyment of a pretty considerable freehold on the spot, where its descendants are still to be found. The parish, of which he was a native, is Llanfihangel Glyn y Myfyr, in the county of Denbigh: in the name of which may be discovered a sort of prophetic allusion to the character, by which his future life was to be marked. And, in the title, which he afterwards assumed, he did not forget, that he had come from the "Valley of Contemplation*." Of his education nothing certain is known to the writer of this sketch; but it may be presumed, that it was only such as the opportunities of the neighbourhood could supply. And those of the country parishes in Wales are not very enviable. However, even this doubtful advantage he did not continue long to enjoy: for he was sent early in life to London, where he was taken into the employment of Messrs. Kidney and Nutt, furriers, in Thames-street, to whose business he eventually succeeded. And he continued to carry on the trade with credit, and a fair portion of success, until the time of his death.

The diligence, however, with which he pursued his particular calling, did not prevent him from devoting a considerable share of his time to his native country, his attachment to which was at once ardent and inflexible †. The unmerited neglect, so long

* The literal translation of *Glyn y Myfyr* is the *Valley of the Contemplative Man.* And "Myfyr" was the bardic designation, which, in compliance with the custom of his country, Mr. Jones adopted in his literary undertakings.

† His national zeal was once evinced in a most singular manner, when, upon being present at the performance of Shakespear's Henry 5th, and seeing Fluelin compel Pistol to eat his leek, he clapp'd his hands with a rapturous exultation, exclaiming at the same time, "That is right, that is "right!"

experienced by our national literature, could not fail to impress itself deeply on a mind so disposed. And he accordingly resolved to appropriate to himself the honourable distinction, which had belonged to the Mæcenases and the Leos of other countries. He became at once the patron of the modern genius of Wales, and the conservator of her past fame. Thus in the obscure retreat of a private individual was nourished a spirit, which, in better times, had been deemed an honour to the mansions of princes.

In the prosecution of this plan he omitted nothing, that might conduce to its proper accomplishment. His time and his purse were alike dedicated to the cause: and the result has been seen in a very extensive collection of MSS., and in the publication of the most antient and valuable remains of Welsh literature. He was likewise the founder of the Gwyneddigion Society, and, during the remainder of his life, did not cease to contribute his pecuniary aid in every way, in which it could be of service, towards advancing the laudable objects of that institution *.

The principal works, which he published at his own expence, were the Poems of Dafydd ab Gwilym, with a Preface from the pen of Mr. William Owen Pughe; and, for the use of his countrymen in humble life, "Dyhewyd y Cristion," or, "the Christian's Resolution," a translation from the English by the celebrated Dr. John Davies. He likewise established a periodical work in Welsh under the title of "Greal." But what will constitute the proudest monument to his fame, as long as the Welsh language shall be known amongst men, is the "Archaiology of Wales," embracing, in three large octavo volumes †, all the most distinguished productions of the country from the fifth to the close of the thirteenth century. These he is represented to have given to the world with a conscientious fidelity, and at an expence, in their collection and publication, somewhat exceeding a thousand pounds. When it is considered, that by far the greatest portion of these literary treasures had not before appeared in print, that many of them were thus, in all probability, saved from impending destruction,—and when with this is remembered the reproachful indifference, that generally prevailed with respect to Welsh learning, making remuneration hopeless,—this act of disinterested patriotism can not be estimated too highly.

* See p. 34, *post.*

† These were published in the respective years of 1801, and 1807. Mr. Jones was assisted in the literary superintendance of the work by Mr. W. O. Pughe and Mr. Edward Williams, the venerable bard of Glamorgan.

To these public exertions the subject of this memoir added others, which, although of a private nature, had the same patriotic object in view, and must not, therefore, be passed without notice. He was at the additional pains and expence of collecting manuscript copies of the Poetry of Wales from the year 1300, when the Archaiology concludes, to the time of Elizabeth, comprised in about fifty quarto volumes, each containing nearly five hundred pages. This valuable collection is at present, it is believed, in the possession of his son.

Nor must it be forgotten, in this inadequate tribute to the memory of Mr. Owen Jones, to record, that he united with his merit as a patriot many amiable private qualities, extending often to individuals that benevolence, of which his country had so largely partaken. A single anecdote, for the authenticity of which the writer of this memoir can vouch, will at once illustrate the justice of the preceding remark. A few years after the establishment of the Gwyneddigion Society, the author of a celebrated Welsh Essay, to which one of its prizes was awarded, attracted, in consequence, the notice of its generous founder. A correspondence between them was the necessary result, and in the course of it our Welsh Mæcenas urged his new friend to give his talents the benefit of an academical education, using, in his letter on the occasion, these characteristic words:—"I will bear "your expences:—draw upon me for any sums of money you "may be in need of whilst in college. And the condition of the "obligation is this, that, if, by any reverse of fortune, I should "become poor, and you in a state of affluence, then you must "maintain me." No stronger proof of his liberal spirit can be required. It is proper to add, however, that the gentleman, here alluded to, was only once under the necessity of trespassing on his patron's munificence; and he then found him true to his benevolent promise. Yet it takes nothing from the merit of his intention, that it was not more fully executed. It should also be remembered, that by his judicious discernment in this instance, and by his encouraging instigation, he was the means of bringing into public notice an individual, who has since proved himself a distinguished proficient in our national literature. He was the Ulysses,

——per quem magnus Danais successit Achilles.

After a life, thus signalized by private excellence and by public zeal, Mr. Owen Jones left the world lamented by many, respected by all. He died at his house in Thames-street, on the

26th of September, 1814, at the age of 73, leaving a widow and three children to unite their sorrow with that of his country, and to derive from its sympathy the truest consolation, that can be experienced for the loss of departed worth *.

***

CRITICISM.

Coll Gwynfa: *or* Paradise Lost translated into Welsh *by* W. O. Pughe. 8vo. pp. 371. 8s. E. Williams, 1819.

The fame of Milton has long ceased to be at the mercy of time. It has, for ages, become one of the brightest possessions of eternity, as far, at least, as that term may be applied to the renown of this world. In no language does there exist a nobler specimen of the union of learning and genius,—of the pomp and dignity of the former and the luxuriance and sublimity of the latter,—than is afforded by Paradise Lost. Its very blemishes result from the exuberance of its author's knowlege; and its beauties are such as his towering fancy could alone have created. It was Milton too, be it remembered, that made the first successful effort to liberate the English Muse from the bondage of rhyme. He first taught her to exchange her monkish frippery for a more sober and a more classical attire †. He also taught his native language itself to soar to a higher point in the scale of poetical excellence; he intermixed with her homely phraseology the polished idioms of more cultivated tongues, and engrafted upon her comparatively naked stock a variety of choice exotics from the genial climes of Rome and of Athens. To the valuable stores,

* A very appropriate tribute was paid, on this melancholy event, by the Gwyneddigion Society to the memory of one, whom they had so many reasons for styling their "Father." All the members appeared in deep mourning,—their silent harp was covered with black crape, and an affecting dirge, composed on the occasion by Mr. John Jones, then bard to the Society, prepared all present to participate with still deeper emotion in the mournful solemnity.

† It is not intended by this assertion to insinuate, that Milton was the first English poet who wrote in blank verse, but only, that he was the first to make a successful use of it. The earliest English composition of this nature was a Translation of the second and fourth books of the Æneis by Lord Surry, in 1557. See Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. iii. p. 21.

with which his classical learning thus supplied him, he likewise added others, which he readily derived from a familiar acquaintance with the most admired productions of modern Italy. It was hence, in all probability, that he learned to give to his verse that melody of construction, which a poetical ear cannot fail to discover. Thus, by his adoption of many foreign words, by a new combination in the mechanism of his sentences, and by a more musical metre, the English language acquired in his hands an accession both of strength and of ornament, to which it had been before unaccustomed:

Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.

The few preceding remarks appeared to be in some degree necessary, to remind the reader of the difficulty, that must naturally accompany any attempt to translate a writer so variously and so learnedly gifted, and of whom it may emphatically be said, with reference to his greatest work, that, as his theme was divine, so his song was equal with his theme.

It must not be deemed surprising, however, that, notwithstanding these discouraging obstacles, endeavours should have been made to naturalize the sublime poem of Paradise Lost in most of the modern languages of Europe. Germany, Holland, Portugal, France and Italy have alike aimed at this honour. With respect to the former two, it will readily be imagined, that the harshness of the Teutonic dialects was found far from being congenial with the dignity, and, it may even be said, the splendour of the original. Whatever advantage, therefore, the German and Dutch translators may have acquired over the English poet in force of expression, if, indeed, there was a chance of superiority there, they must have lost in their efforts to emulate the studied harmony of his metrical cadences, and the classical richness of his style. The Portuguese language again, so little adapted as it has been to the higher strains of poetry, may well be pardoned for having failed to pourtray, in any remarkable manner, the excellence of the English epic.

On the French translators it can hardly be requisite to offer any remark. From a prudent regard to the infirmity of their vernacular tongue, so unequal to the bolder flights of imagination, they have not ventured, for the most part, to give their versions a poetical dress. Conscious of the justice of Voltaire's satirical observation, that his countrymen wanted an epic head, they felt, at the same time, that they were also in want of an epic language.

The Italians alone seem to have succeeded in their attempts to seize, in any considerable degree, the spirit of their great prototype; and, if they have not equalled him in the diversified energy of his metrical pauses, they have perhaps surpassed him in the softness and mellifluence of their verse. But even for this advantage, if indeed a monotonous sweetness deserve the name, they must have been indebted more to the musical qualities of their language than to any superiority of poetical art. The Italian versions, however, are for the most part pretty accurate copies of the original both in spirit and metre; and it may be noticed, that a certain affinity in the accentuation of the two languages afforded, in the latter instance, every opportunity for success *.

From this cursory view of the continental translations it is now time to turn to that, which has given occasion to the foregoing remarks; and to a Cambro-Briton the task can not but be one of delight and of exultation.

It is certainly a matter of surprise, that, of the numerous English classics, and particularly the poets, no one of any eminence should, until now, have made its appearance in a Welsh dress. It was reserved for the celebrated author of our national dictionary to open one path as successfully as he had closed another,—for him, who had given us a Johnson, to make Milton our own. And the masterly style, in which he has achieved this last performance, merits the gratitude, as it must undoubtedly receive the praise, of his country. For the felicity of the execution will be allowed by all competent and unprejudiced judges to be in proportion with the novelty of the design.

Nor does this novelty consist only in the attempt to translate into Welsh the most sublime and, perhaps, the most difficult of

* The Latin translations of PARADISE LOST are here passed without notice, not because they possess no merit, but because a comparison between the living and dead languages can not, in this case, be fairly made. Besides, however excellent a Latin or Greek version may be in its way, there is still such a want of originality, such a servile mimicry of the antient writers in all modern productions of this description, as can not fail to be unsatisfactory to every person of true poetical feeling. The following is the commencement of Dr. Trapp's Translation of PARADISE LOST:—

" Primum hominis lapsum vetitâque ex arbore fructus
Avulsos, quorum è gustu lethale venenum
Mortem, atque omne malum, quo plectimur, intulit orbi;
Amissâ Edenâ, donec nos asserat horto
Unus homo major redimens, sedique beatæ;
Cœlestis cane Musa, ———

English poems. It embraces moreover an endeavour, most successfully accomplished, to adapt the Welsh language to the metre of the original. It may not be generally known out of Wales, that the poetry of that country, as far as its metrical harmony is concerned, is founded on principles exclusively its own. Comprising, as it does, in its four-and-twenty metres, every variety of verse known to antient or modern Europe, it still adapts them to a certain law unknown to all other countries. This, in the language of Wales, is styled CYNGHANEDD, which consists in a certain correspondent alliteration of words with reference to their rhythmical symphony. Upon a skilful observance of this principle the beauties of Welsh verse mainly depend. It was established as a constituent part of it as early as the ninth century, since which time it has hitherto continued, though greatly modified and improved, to be considered as indispensible to its formation.

From what has been above said it will be inferred, that the English heroic verse is not unknown to the Welsh poets: but, divested of the peculiarity just noticed, it must be regarded as a novelty. And, when the disadvantage of writing in a metre, stripped of its natural aids, is duly considered, the merit of Mr. Pughe's performance can not fail to be enhanced. Nothing but the natural vigour and buoyancy of our noble language, and his masterly management of it, could have raised it superior to such an obstacle. But this is not all: he has not merely surmounted this difficulty, but has been most happy in imitating the harmonious mechanism of the original, as will be evident by a comparison of many of those passages, in which Milton's great skill in that respect is most conspicuous. In a word, Mr. Pughe's countrymen must feel truly grateful to him for thus proving most satisfactorily, that the Welsh, even when shorn of its own poetical beams, is not only equal in energy and in majesty to the English, but is far more expressive and more harmonious. And, it should farther be observed, that our translator has, with much judgment, availed himself of the several dialects of the Welsh tongue, to give to his work that copiousness and variety, for which the English bard felt himself obliged to have recourse to the assistance of foreign languages.

The exordium of Paradise Lost is here selected to prove, in some degree, the justice of what has been now asserted, not indeed because it furnishes the best instance that might be selected, but because, being so well known to all English readers,

it will render the transcribing of the original in a great measure unnecessary.

" Am drosedd Dyn, ac aeron teg y pren
Yn waharddedig, idd y byd ei flas
A ddygai angeu, a phob echrys wae,
Gan golli Eden, nes adferer ni,
Trwy un mwy Dyn, a meddu y fro gain,
O cana Awen nefawl, hon oddiar
Ben Horeb, neu o gwmwl Sinai ddu,
A roddit idd y bugel hwnw ddawn,
A ddysgai gyntaf y dewisawl had
I wybod, yn y dechreu fal y daeth
Y byd o Dryblith * dwys: Neu os i ti
Tirionach mynydd Sion ac wrth ffrwd
Silöa hon à rêd ger gwyddfa Duw:
Oddiyno anfon nawdd i gân mor hy,
O fryd anturiaw nid ar isel hynt
Uwch holl orseddau awenyddion ail †,
Tra synio am newyddion bethau gwiw:
Yn bènaf Ti, O Yspryd Gwir, à wyt
O flaen pob teml yn dewis calon lân,
Addysga fi, o herwydd gwyddiad wyt;
Cynnrychawl odd y cyntaf oeddit Ti,
A chan amledu dy adenydd gwrdd,
Mal y golomen, ar y dyfnder mawr
Eisteddit, a dëorai iddo hil:
Hyn ynnof dywyll sydd yn oleu gwna,
Derchafa hyn sy wael; trwy hawl mor fawr
Yr hònwyf drefn Rhagluniaeth erioed a byth,
A chyfiawnâu i ddynion lwybrau Duw."

No one, conversant with the Welsh language, can fail to appreciate the merits of this passage, and especially of the last eleven lines, beginning, in the English, with

" But chiefly thou, O Spirit that dost prefer."

Let us compare Mr. Pughe's version with the Italian translation by Paolo Rolli of the same lines. It is thus he renders them.

* " *Tryblith.*]—Chaos, neu Cymysg, ydoedd yr enw gan y Groegiaid idd y ddaiar, pan oedd afluniaidd, cyn y crëad."

† " Neu, *Uwch i orseddfa awenyddion Gryw*]—Bæotia, talaeth o dîr Gryw, à elwid hefyd *Aonia*, neu wlâd yr *Awen;* ac yno safai moel *Helicon* lle, meddynt, yr ymorseddai yr *Aonides* neu yr *Awenyddion:* ac o hyny yr enwid *Aonian Mount* yn y ganiad hon."

" Principalmente o tu Spirito, che a tempii
Tutti anteponi un retto e puro cuore,
Istruiscimi tu, perche tu sai,
E dal principio essendo tu presente;
Giacesti con possenti ale distese
Qual colomba, a covar su'l vasto abisso,
E pregnante il facesti: or tu rischiara
Quanto è d'oscuro in me; tu quel, ch' è umíle,
In alto lieva e ve'l sostini, ond' Io,
Al sommo d'un così grande argomento,
Possa asserir la Providenza eterna,
E all' Uom le vie giustificar di Dio."

No person, even moderately acquainted with the two languages, can hesitate where to bestow the preference. The Welsh translator has not only equalled the Italian in the melody of his verse, but has an abundant advantage in the force and variety of his cadences. To compare the Welsh with the Italian in melody may appear a species of arrogance to the admirers of the latter tongue. But it is a fact beyond dispute, that our native language is capable of as soft and as sweet a combination as the Italian. With a far richer store of vocal sounds, it makes a less frequent use of the dental or hard consonants, as may be fully illustrated by a comparison of the lines here quoted. Indeed the whole passage, extracted from Mr. Pughe's Translation, bears testimony to the fact. Nothing can be sweeter than the first six lines:—and of these the fifth and sixth are particularly so. But the work abounds in examples of this sort, some of which will be noticed hereafter.

It would be a task of too much time to dwell now on all the beauties of Coll Gwynfa. It shall be the business, however, of a future number to enter into a more minute examination of its most prominent features. All, that has been attempted on the present occasion, is a survey of its general characteristics; and, if the language of praise alone has been adopted, it has been because no other could be conscientiously used. The merit of the undertaking was of itself sufficient to call for it; and when to this are added the judiciousness of the design, and the skill evinced in the execution, what alternative has a critic, with reference to the general character of the work, but panegyric?

***

AWEN CYMRU.

A'th rodd yw athrwydd Awen.——Edm. Prys.

PENNILLION*.

I.

Ni chân côg ddim amser gaua',
Ni chân telyn heb ddim tannau,
Ni chân calon, hawdd i'ch wybod,
Pan fo galar ar ei gwaelod.

II.

Cleddwch fi, pan fyddwyf farw,
Yn y coed tan ddail y derw;
Chwi gewch weled llangc pen felyn
Ar fy mêdd yn canu'r delyn.

III.

Dyn a garo grwth a thelyn,
Sain cynghanedd, cân, ag englyn,
A gar y pethau mwya tirion,
Sy'n y Nef y' mhlith angylion:

Yr ûn ni charo dôn a chaniad
Ni chair ynddo naws o gariad;
Fe welir hwn, tra byddo byw,
Yn gâs gan ddyn, a châs gan Dduw.

IV.

Clywais ddadwrdd, clywais ddwndrio,
Clywais ran o'r byd yn beio;
Erioed ni chlywais neb yn datgan
Fawr o 'i hynod feiau ei hunan.

V.

Pan fo seren yn rhagori,
Fe fydd pawb a 'i olwg arni,
Pan ddaw unwaith gwmmwl drosti,
Ni bydd mwy o sôn am dani.

* If any of these Pennillion should have before appeared in print (as indeed some have), it is hoped, that their merit will be received as a sufficient apology for their republication. An attempt to convey to the English reader some idea of their peculiar excellence will be found in a subsequent page: but it is impossible, that any translations should do adequate justice to the sweet simplicity and characteristic expressiveness of the originals.—Ed.

VI.

Gwell na'r gwîn yw'r mêdd pêr hidlaid,
Diod Beridd yr hên Frutaniaid;
Gwîn a bair ynfydrwydd cynnen,
Ond yn y mêdd mae dawn yr Awen.

VI.

D'accw lwyn o fedw gleision,
D'accw 'r llwyn sy 'n torri 'nghalon;
Nid am y llwyn yr wy 'n ochneidio,
Ond am y ferch a welais ynddo.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE BARDS.

CONSOLATION OF ELFFIN,

BY TALIESIN *.

Fair Elffin, cease to lament!
Let no one be dissatisfied with his own:
To despair will bring no advantage.
No man sees what supports him;
The prayer of Cynllo † will not be in vain,
God will not violate his promise.
Never in Gwyddno's wear
Was there such good luck as to-night.

Fair Elffin, dry thy cheeks!
To be too sorrowful will profit thee nothing,
Although thou thinkest, thou hast no gain,
Too much grief will bring thee no good.
Nor doubt the miracles of the Almighty:
Although I am but little, I am well-gifted.
From seas and from mountains,
And from the depths of rivers,
God brings wealth to the fortunate man.

Elffin, of lively qualities,
Thy resolution is unmanly;
Thou must not be too pensive:
Better to trust in God than to forebode ill.

* See page 11 *ante*.

† A saint,—native of South Wales,—to whom there are three churches dedicated; one in Radnorshire, and two in Cardiganshire.

Weak and small as I am
On the foaming beach of the ocean,
In the day of trouble I shall be
Of more service to thee than three hundred salmon *.

Elffin, of notable qualities,
Be not displeased at thy misfortune;
Although reclined, thus weak, in my bag †,
There dwells a virtue in my tongue.
While I continue thy protector,
Thou hast not much to fear.
Through a remembrance of the names of the Trinity,
None shall be able to harm thee.

***

ENGLISH POETRY.

THE SOLILOQUY OF A BARD, ON THE SPOT,

After the last Conflict ‡ in Snowdon.

FROM THE WELSH.

Lo! the heroic heap I see,
My country's sons that once were free;
They fell a falling land to save,
And grateful Cambria decks the grave.

Insatiate Saxons §—there they lie,
Their spirits dare you from the sky;
Eternal rivals—fiends despair!
For Vice and Virtue meet not there.

Again I see you point the dart,
Its purpose fell—the patriot heart;

* Alluding to the failure of his fishery.

† This has reference to the leathern bag, in which he is said to have been found, when taken up in Elffin's wear.

‡ The politic Edward well knew, though Llewelyn was dead, that the country was unsubdued while the recesses of Snowdon were unexplored: here, therefore, it was, that in a morass (the Thermopylæ of Cambria) these heroes were attacked by the Earl of Warwick, who, after a most sanguinary conflict, by a superiority in numbers and tactics, prevailed over this intrepid band struggling for the expiring independence of their country, and who, when they failed to conquer, chose to fall.

NOTES TO "BEAUMARIS BAY."

§ The various invaders of England were, and still are, denominated Saeson, (Saxons), as in the Levant every European distinction is lost in the word Frank.

Yet know—this arm no Saxon fears,
Though Cambria's fields are wet with tears.

Again I hear the dire decree,
That bids fair Freedom cease to be;
The world, that Edward wants, we give—
The good, the brave, disdain to live.

Yet England's sons, in future times,
Shall read in blood their father's crimes;
Concealed in flowers * I see the spear,
The thorns that shall their vitals tear.

Yes, yes! the day, that marks their doom,
Again shall see my country bloom—
To Britain—Britain's race restore,
And bid Contention cease to roar.

For me divides yon bursting cloud,
The flash † descends in summons loud;
I rise to join yon hallow'd host,
Nor fall to swell a tyrant's boast. LLWYD.

TRANSLATIONS OF THE PENNILLION.

See pp. 29, and 30, *ante*.

I.

In winter's cold no cuckoo sings,
Nor sounds the harp without its strings,
Dumb too the heart, as well we know,
When stifling sorrow lurks below.

II.

In yonder wood, 'neath yon oak-tree,
Lay me, when I'm dead, I crave;
And soon the minstrel youth you'll see
Tune his wild harp o'er my grave.

III.

The man, to whom the harp is dear,
Who loves the sound of song and ode,
Will cherish all that's cherish'd there,
Where angels hold their blest abode:

* This evidently alludes to the long and destructive war of the roses.

† In antient times, a flash of lightning was the Messenger sent for the favourites of Heaven.

But he, who loves not tune or strain,
Nature to him no love has given;
You'll see him, while his days remain,
Hateful at once to earth and heaven *.

IV.

What noise and scandal fill my ear,
One half the world to censure prone!
Of all the faults, that thus I hear,
None yet have told me of their own.

V.

When a star in splendour blazes,
How each eye in rapture gazes!
Let but a cloud its brilliance cover,
And this wonder is all over.

VI.

Better than wine the flowing mead,
Mead, beloved by bards of yore;
Let wine to strife and madness lead,
Mead unlocks the Muse's store †.

* The association of the love of music with the love of virtue is, by no means, uncommon. The poets of Italy, where Terpsichore has ever put on her most fascinating graces, make frequent allusions to it. And amongst the English, whose musical taste bears a strong resemblance with that of the Italians, may be found some fine poetical passages to the same effect. Of these the well-known lines of Shakespear, beginning

"The man who hath no music in himself,"

and the beautiful exordium of Congreve's "Mourning Bride" are the most remarkable. Yet to neither of these passages are the stanzas, above translated, inferior. On the contrary, by viewing the subject, as they do, in either light, they seem to have an advantage over the English lines. And there may, moreover, be discovered in them a sort of sympathy with the serious and plaintive character of the Welsh music. But this is a point, on which I must not dwell. The subject is already in far abler hands; and, no doubt, ample justice will be done to it by the gentleman, whose introductory letter on Welsh Music appears in a preceding page.—Ed.

† Literally, "In mead is the gift of poetical genius."—The poets of all countries have been fond of appropriating this virtue to their favourite beverage. Amongst the antients Anacreon and Horace have been most profuse in their panegyrics on the subject. The latter even goes so far as to deny to water drinkers any claim to poetical inspiration. Thus he says,

"Nulla placere diu, nec vivere carmina possunt,
"Quæ scribuntur aquæ potoribus." EP.—Lib. i. Ep. 19.

Without undertaking to determine this important point, it may safely be presumed, that the lovers of mead had at least as strong a title to the favours of the Muses as the bibbers of wine. The produce of the honey-comb must have been, to the full, as pregnant with the gift of song as the juice of the grape. The Welsh poets abound in the praise of mead: and Taliesin, as before noticed, has left us a fine eulogium on this bardic beverage.—Ed.

VII.

Behold yon birchen grove just by,
It pains my bosom every minute;
Yet 'tis not for the grove I sigh,
*** It is for her I saw within it.

WALES.

[Under this head will, in future, be collected all intelligence of moment relating to the modern state of Wales, whether of a local nature or not. The space, unexpectedly occupied by one or two articles, has encroached, in the present instance, upon that intended to be devoted to this purpose. In consequence, a few topics of interest are reluctantly reserved for another opportunity.—Ed.]

GWYNEDDIGION SOCIETY.—Of the various means, adopted to promote any patriotic objects, the establishment of national societies has ever been found the most effectual. In a foreign country, in particular, such associations are productive of peculiar benefit, by concentrating in one point those individual attachments and interests, which, from a want of this sympathetic union, are too apt to wither away. And moreover, the scattered rays, thus condensed, as it were, in a focus, cannot fail to acquire additional lustre and energy.

For this reason, a brief sketch of the Gwyneddigion Society, obviously originating in this principle, cannot but be congenial with the design of the Cambro-Briton. This praiseworthy institution, at first confined, as the name indicates, to the men of North Wales, or Gwynedd, was established in London in 1771. Its founder was the late Mr. Owen Jones, whose benefactions to his country are shortly commemorated in a former part of this Number. Several other patriotic individuals united in the undertaking, proposing, as their objects, the illustration of the literature of Wales and the encouragement of her bards.

To promote these liberal views, they have, at different times, patronised several works connected with the Principality, and, amongst these, Mr. Parry's Welsh Melodies, Mr. Roberts's Welsh Geography, and, recently, the Translation of Paradise Lost by Mr. Pughe. But the chief aim of the Gwyneddigion Society has been to keep alive that attachment to their national music and poetry, by which, in days of yore, their country was so highly distinguished. With this view, they made an attempt, several years ago, to revive the antient Congresses of the Bards, and

distributed medals amongst the successful candidates. They have likewise been in the practice, for some years, of rewarding, with similar prizes, the best Welsh poems on subjects selected annually for the occasion.

The meetings of the Society take place on the first Monday in every month, when the sound of the antient harp of Cymru, and its sweet Pennillion unite to perpetuate those patriotic feelings, which first gave birth to the institution, and to chasten the hour of conviviality with the affecting strains of that land, of which, in the appropriate language of one of its own poets, it may justly be said,

"Brodîr, gnawd ynddi brydydd,
Heb ganu ni bu, ni bydd."

Hail, social land, to thee belong
The bard, and never-failing song. ***

CAERMARTHEN EISTEDDFOD.—It is not possible, on the present occasion, to do more than give a brief outline of the proceedings of this first general meeting of the CAMBRIAN SOCIETY. A detailed account of the origin and nature of this commendable institution will appear, it is hoped, in the next number of the CAMBRO-BRITON, with the aim of whose pages it can not but be congenial to preserve every important feature of an undertaking so well calculated, in its design at least, to promote the cultivation of our national literature.

On Thursday, the 8th of July, in pursuance of a public notice, given some months before, the first *Eisteddfod*, or Session, of the Cambrian Society was holden at the Ivy-Bush Hotel, in the town of Caermarthen. The Bishop of St. David's, in the absence of Lord Dynevor, President of the Association in Dyfed, took the chair, the duties of which he discharged with a zeal and ability worthy of the interesting occasion, as well as of the active part, which his Lordship had previously taken in forwarding the success of a cause he had so warmly espoused.

The objects of the *Eisteddfod* having been stated by the President in a brief and appropriate manner, and afterwards more fully detailed in an animated speech by Mr. Edward Williams, Bard to the Society, the business of the day was opened with a recital of the prize compositions, which were adjudged as follows:—

I. *An* ENGLYN *on the Harp new-strung.*—Rev. WALTER DAVIES, Rector of Manafon, Montgomeryshire.

II. *A* CYWYDD *on the Death of Sir Thomas Picton.*—The same.

III. *An* AWDL *on the Death of the Queen.*—Mr. GRIFFITH WILLIAMS, of Llandegai, Caernarvonshire.

IV. *An* ESSAY *on the distinct Characters and comparative Advantages of the Bardic Institutions of Caermarthen and Glamorgan.*—Rev. WALTER DAVIES.

V. *An* ESSAY *on the Language and Learning of Britain under the Roman Government.*—Rev. JOHN JONES, of Llanfair Isgaer, Caernarvonshire.

In consequence of the extraordinary success of Mr. Walter Davies on this literary arena, he was placed, by the general voice, in the bardic chair, and invested with a blue ribbon, intended as an imitation of the antient insignia of Bardism. The thanks of the meeting were likewise deservedly voted to him on the occasion. After some other business of ceremony a letter was read from the "Royal Society of Antiquarians of France," to the President of the Cambrian Society, soliciting a correspondence on subjects connected with their respective associations, and promising, in that event, to transmit to the Cambrian Society the Memoirs of the French Institution.

On Friday, the 9th of July, an able contest on the harp took place between Mr. Thomas Blayney and Mr. Henry Humphreys, both from Montgomeryshire, when, after a variety of national airs, skilfully executed by each competitor, the former was declared to be the successful candidate. A silver harp was, according to antient custom, presented to him as the reward of his triumph, together with a donation of thirty guineas; while the merit of his rival was at the same time acknowleged by a gratuity of half that sum. Thus terminated all the essential proceedings of this *Eisteddfod*. The next, it is said, will be holden at Wrexham, in Denbighshire, in the course of the ensuing summer. ***

JESUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION.—It is truly cheering to see the sunshine of patriotism burst forth at length upon our native country, over which the cloud of indifference had so long thrown her ominous shade. To this favourable revolution must be ascribed the establishment of the Cambrian Society, and likewise the Association of Gentlemen, educated at Jesus College, Oxford, whose first meeting was held at Dollgelley, on the 4th of last month. It was attended by Sir R. W. Vaughan, Col. Vaughan, the Principal, and several of the Fellows, of the College, with many other individuals of the first respectabilisy. Among the laudable resolutions, adopted on the occasion, it was determined to establish an annual subscription, by the present and late mem-

bers of Jesus College, for the purpose of encouraging, with appropriate premiums, the cultivation of the Welsh language amongst the collegians, and especially those destined for the church. An object, thus uniting a spirit of patriotism with the best interests of our established religion, can not be too much applauded. It is, in every way, worthy of the respectable source, from which it has emanated. All that remains is to hope for a success answerable to the spirited character of the enterprise. It is rumoured, that the meetings of this Society are to be held only biennially. Why not every year? Individuals, who assemble for so praiseworthy a purpose, cannot assemble too often. ***

MENAI BRIDGE.—Some years have elapsed since the design of erecting a bridge over the Menai-Strait was first contemplated, for the obvious purpose of facilitating the intercourse between this kingdom and Ireland. In 1810 and 1811 (as appears from the Parliamentary Report recently published), several plans of cast-iron bridges were proposed to a Committee of the House of Commons, and by them approved as adapted to the object in question, and particularly one of a single arch of 500 feet in the span, and 100 feet above high water, submitted in 1811 by Mr. Telford, and the expence of which was estimated at somewhat more than £127,000. The difficulty, however, of "fixing a "proper centering, owing to the rocky bottom of the channel, "and the depth and rapidity of the tideway," seems to have caused this project to be abandoned almost as soon as it was conceived. And accordingly we find Mr. Telford's plan of the cast-iron bridge accompanied by the design of one to be constructed on the principle of suspension. This, in the course of a few years afterwards, upon being engaged to execute a similar work over the Mersey at Runcorn, he was enabled to improve very considerably.

In consequence he laid before a Committee of the House of Commons last year his new design. According to this, the Iron Hanging Bridge over the Menai will consist of one opening, of 560 feet, between the points of suspension; in addition to which there will be seven arches, four on the coast of Anglesey, and three on that of Caernarvonshire, each 50 feet in the span, making the total length of the bridge 910 feet. The height above the level of the high-water line will be 100 feet. "The road-way," says Mr. Telford, "will embrace two carriage-ways, each 12 feet "in breadth, with a foot-path of four feet between them. The "whole is to be suspended from four lines of strong iron cables,

" by perpendicular iron rods, placed five feet apart, and these " rods will support the road-way framing. The suspending " power is calculated at 2016 tons, and the weight, to be sus- " pended, exclusive of the cables, is 342 tons, leaving a dis- " posable power of 1674 tons. The four sides of the road-ways " will be made of framed iron work, firmly bound together for " seven feet in height, and there will be a similar work for five " feet in depth below the cables. The weight of the whole " bridge, between the points of suspension, will be 489 tons."— " The abutments will consist of the masonry work, comprising " the extreme stone work, the two piers, and the seven arches " before mentioned; each of the two piers will be 60 feet by " 40½ wide, at high water mark, having a foundation of rock."— " Upon the summit of the two main piers will be erected a frame " of cast-iron work, of a pyramidal form, for the purpose of rais- " ing the cables, from which the bridge is to be suspended."

The probable cost of erecting this stupendous structure Mr. Telford has estimated at sixty, or, allowing for any unforeseen charges, at most seventy thousand pounds, about half the calculated expence of a cast-iron bridge on the old plan. The spot, chosen for its scite, is at Ynys y Môch, a little to the westward of Bangor Ferry, which had been fixed upon for the work first proposed, and where the opposite shores seem to offer every advantage for the undertaking. The first stone of this national bridge was laid, without any ceremony, at noon on Tuesday, the 10th of August, by Mr. Provis, resident engineer, and Messrs. Straphen and Hall, who have contracted for the masonry-work. A little parade would not have disgraced the occasion.

It is gratifying to be able to add to this short account, in the words of the Parliamentary Report, that " the uniformly con- " current evidence of all the witnesses, examined before the " Commissioners, forms a very satisfactory confirmation of Mr. " Telford's opinion of the practicability of constructing such a " bridge, sufficiently strong and safe for all purposes across the " Menai, and by which the navigation cannot be, in the least " degree, obstructed." This satisfactory intelligence must, it is hoped, have allayed the apprehensions of those individuals, who felt it their duty to present a memorial against the erection of this bridge, and which was, no doubt, framed under a misconception of the precise nature of the design.

The following poetical *morceau*, with its accompanying notes, cannot fail to be received as an interesting addition to this article, notwithstanding its apparent reference to the original project of

a cast-iron bridge. The happy variety of anecdote, by which the verse is illustrated, would at once perhaps have betrayed the author of "Beaumaris Bay," without the aid of his name. **

LINES

ON THE INTENDED BRIDGE OVER THE MENAI, AT BANGOR FERRY.

So shall the Tritons, in their floating shells,
See modern Magic, by her happier spells,
Raise the tall pier, extend the graceful bow,
And smile at dangers that may lurk below,
Pass o'er the tempest, when it rages—roars,
And bid a new Rialto bind the shores. LLWYD.

AT length the predictions of the Bards, the suggesstion of intellect, and the wish of ages, and of nations, are likely to be accomplished; and the wonder a few years hence will be, not that all this is done, but that it was so long undone.—For the wealth and industry of a country, especially of a commercial one, are in no way more rationally employed, than in the promotion of its intercourse, and the consequent interchange of its produce: and it has long been the disgrace of a great empire, (whose means, for every other purpose, have been the effect of a wish,) that the strait of Menai has, in a stormy day, put a stop to its intercourse, and the more so, as Nature, by way of atonement for the inconvenience created by the convulsion which tore the island from the Continent *, has left every inducement for the erection of a bridge.

The first spot for this purpose is evidently the Caeth Wy (narrow water), Porthaethwy, latterly, Bangor ferry, as most centrical and best sheltered from the prevailing west winds by the projecting banks of Trê r borth and Vaenol; both shores presenting the most solid and inviting abutments, with the intermediate auxiliary of the Islet, called Ynys y môch. In addition to these advantages it is, as if designedly, on the very line leading from the pass of Nant Franco to Holyhead.

The second is at the Cribiniau (rakes) a ridge of rocks, resembling the teeth of that iimplement, dry at low water, and placed as if to induce the arches that were to "entice the infant to the parent isle."—BEAUMARIS BAY.

They are situated below Lord Anglesey's Column, and on the verge of the vortex called Pwll Cerris, which an ancient poet most truly describes, as—

"Y pella o'i gôv o'r pylla i gid."
Of all the mad pools the maddest.

* See the antient Welsh Triad, p. 9, *ante*.

In the year 61 the Roman infanty, under Suetonius, crossed the Fretum, on a bridge of boats, to Pant yr Ysgraffie, (the inlet of the boats) under Porthaml; while the cavalry forded it below Llanidan. Even so lately as 1475, Robin Leiav says:—

" Av i dir Môn, er dwr Menai
" Tros y traeth, ond aros trai."
I'll pass into Anglesey at low water,
Notwithstanding the Menai.

Edward the First also crossed it in the same manner at Moel y don, but suffered severely from an unforeseen attack, on the return of the tide; and several of his leading warriors now lie in the Chapel of the Friery, near Beaumaris.

Rhys Nanmor, a Pembrokeshire Bard, contemplating the Cribiniau, in 1460, fancied he saw a timber bridge rising from the rocks, and exclaimed—

" Ac yna
" Coed crai ar Venai vydd."

In 1480, the intelligent Sir David Trevor, Rector of Llanallgo, in Môn, in his ode to the ferry boat of Porthaethwy, (a series of similies) is at once amusing and instructing on this subject.

And in 1500, Davydd Gorllech, in very sweet lines, describes the manner and time, when the patriotic undertaking should begin. When this national object is completed, there will then be little doubt, that the great commercial towns in the northern parts of England, as well as Liverpool and Chester, will be benefited by an embankment, and a few arches over the Cynwy.

It is delightful to contemplate the ability contributed by the different parts of the empire to its general benefit. Scotland improves our highways and harbours by the talents of her Telford. The Hon. and Rev. Mr. Dawson, (uncle to Lord Portarlington), a few years ago, made repeated tours from Ireland into Snowdonia, pointing out the neglected pass of Capel Curig. He was indefatigable in his endeavours, as he beneficently hoped, for the common good. The hint was seconded, and acted upon, by that ornament of his country, the late Lord Penryn. And Cambria blessed even London itself by the unremitting exertions of Sir Hugh Myddleton, Bart. who led into it the New River, in the reign of James the first. Sir Hugh was one of the younger of nine sons of David Myddleton, Esq. of Gwaenynog, near Denbigh.